

## PEAK EMPLOYMENT SEASON IN CLARK COUNTY



Every year between early September and late October, Clark County sees a spike in their employment figures. The trend stays true this year in correspondence with numbers recently released by the Washington Employment Security Department, according to The Oregonian. The big reason for this upswing is the growth of seasonal hiring thanks to construction projects finishing up before winter and the hiring for education-related needs. The beginning of the 2012-13 school year created more than 1,000 education-related jobs. Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade education in Clark County helped produce 700 jobs through September. Approximately 400 jobs were instituted through the government, with a majority of them related to education. Bus drivers and aides saw about 100 new positions generated, mostly for preschool. While the rise in employment thrives in September and October, the months thereafter see a trend downward. When it gets cold and wintery outside, most construction jobs hibernate for the season. When the new year hits, normally unemployment inside of Clark County is at its highest mark for the year. Early reports say that Clark County's unemployment rate fell approximately 3 percent from August to September. County officials, however, believe that figure will be amended to show a 1 percentage point dip in unemployment, where it will show that August's number of 11.3 percent swooned to 10 percent in September. Last September, the county's unemployment rate sat around 12 percent. During this recession, the unemployment figures of South Washington have stayed elevated comparative to the state and national level. The county will probably weigh in at 10 percent unemployment as opposed to the 8.5 percent mark of the state and the 7.8 figure in regards to the country. Due to the latest claims for unemployment benefits, the job loss flow in the United States is halting somewhat. The hiring process, however, has not built up enough steam to bring the jobless back into the workplace. What is frightening is that there are other areas of Southwest Washington that have toiled worse than Clark County has this fall. That said, about 2,300 Clark County residents are still on emergency unemployment benefits, which are scheduled to be eliminated early next year. Around the area, Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties have suffered job losses since the start of the school year, even with hiring being more rampant in September. Hundreds of positions in Cowlitz County in the departments of manufacturing, transportation and trade were terminated. In Wahkiakum County, Columbia View Care Center was shut down. This resulted in 40 lost jobs in September.